

Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation
Water Resources Division
Water Rights Bureau

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
For Routine Actions with Limited Environmental Impact

Revised 11-00

Note: Instructions to DNRC staff for preparing this EA can be found at:
http://www.dnrc.state.mt.us/eis_ea.html

Part I. Proposed Action Description

1. **Applicant/Contact name and address:** Richard S. Jerde, 704 W 22nd St., Kearney, NE 68845
2. **Type of action:** Application for Beneficial Water Use Permit 30018694-76LJ
3. **Water source name:** Whitefish Lake
4. **Location affected by action:** NW NE NE, section 5, T 31N, R 22W, Flathead County
5. **Narrative summary of the proposed project, purpose, action to be taken, and benefits:** The DNRC shall issue a water use permit if an applicant proves the criteria in 85-2-311, MCA are met. The applicants propose to pump water from Whitefish Lake at a rate up 45 gpm up to 1.83 acre-feet per year for domestic and lawn & garden irrigation uses. The system will provide water for one home on Lot 7 of Britells Point of Pines subdivision.
6. **Agencies consulted during preparation of the Environmental Assessment:**
(include agencies with overlapping jurisdiction)

Montana Natural Heritage Program, State Historic Preservation Office, MT DEQ and
MT Dept. of Fish, Wildlife and Parks website.

Part II. Environmental Review

1. **Environmental Impact Checklist:**

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Water quantity, quality and distribution

Water quantity: Assess whether the source of supply is identified as a chronically or periodically dewatered stream by DFWP. Assess whether the proposed use will worsen the already dewatered condition.

Determination: No impact. Whitefish Lake is not listed as dewatered.

Water quality: Assess whether the stream is listed as water quality impaired or threatened by DEQ, and whether the proposed project will affect water quality.

Determination: Whitefish Lake is not on the State's 303d list. It has a surface area of 3,350 acres. It is fed by several streams, but is primarily spring fed and discharges into the Whitefish River. It is estimated the volume of water in the lake is 371,850 acre-feet making this request of .00008% of the lake's volume. The water quality in Whitefish Lake will not be impacted by this minor use of water.

Groundwater: Assess if the proposed project impacts ground water quality or supply. If this is a groundwater appropriation, assess if it could impact adjacent surface water flows.

Determination: No impacts.

Diversion works

Assess whether the means of diversion, construction and operation of the appropriation works of the proposed project will impact any of the following: channel impacts, flow modifications, barriers, riparian areas, dams, well construction.

Determination: A 1.5 hp submersible electric pump will be placed on the lake bottom approximately 50 feet off shore. Minimal disturbance is anticipated.

Unique, endangered, fragile or limited environmental resources

Endangered and threatened species: Assess whether the proposed project will impact any threatened or endangered fish, wildlife, plants or aquatic species or any "species of special concern," or create a barrier to the migration or movement of fish or wildlife. For groundwater, assess whether the proposed project, including impacts on adjacent surface flows, would impact any threatened or endangered species or "species of special concern."

Determination: Although Bull Trout are found in the lake, the Common Loon on the lake and Grizzly Bears pass through the area from time to time, no impacts are anticipated. This house and was built in 1985.

Wetlands: Consult and assess whether the apparent wetland is a functional wetland (according to COE definitions), and whether the wetland resource would be impacted.

Determination: No impact.

Ponds: For ponds, consult and assess whether existing wildlife, waterfowl, or fisheries resources would be impacted.

Determination: There are no ponds appurtenant to this action.

Geology/Soil quality, stability and moisture

Assess whether there will be degradation of soil quality, alteration of soil stability, or moisture content. Assess whether the soils are heavy in salts that could cause saline seep.

Determination: Saline Seep is not a concern in this area. All exposed soils will be stabilized immediately after construction.

Vegetation cover, quantity and quality/Noxious weeds

Assess impacts to existing vegetative cover. Assess whether the proposed project would result in the establishment or spread of noxious weeds.

Determination: Weed control will be the responsibility of the owner..

Air quality

Assess whether there will be a deterioration of air quality or adverse effects on vegetation due to increased air pollutants.

Determination: No impacts.

Historical and archeological sites

Assess whether there will be degradation of unique archeological or historical sites in the vicinity of the proposed project.

Determination: No sites of historical importance were identified on these properties.

Demands on environmental resources of land, water, and energy

Assess any other impacts on environmental resources of land, water and energy not already addressed.

Determination: No other impacts have been identified.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

Locally adopted environmental plans and goals

Assess whether the proposed project is inconsistent with any locally adopted environmental plans and goals.

Determination: This project is consistent with the land uses of the area.

Access to and quality of recreational and wilderness activities

Assess whether the proposed project will impact access to or the quality of recreational and wilderness activities.

Determination: No impacts.

Human health

Assess whether the proposed project impacts on human health.

Determination: This action will have no adverse impact on human health.

Private property

Assess whether there are any government regulatory impacts on private property rights.

Yes___ No_XX_. If yes, analyze any alternatives considered that could reduce, minimize, or eliminate the regulation of private property rights.

Determination:

Other human environmental issues

For routine actions of limited environmental impact, the following may be addressed in a checklist fashion.

Impacts on:

- (a) Cultural uniqueness and diversity ? None
- (b) Local and state tax base and tax revenues ? Slight.
- (c) Existing land uses ? None
- (d) Quantity and distribution of employment ? None
- (e) Distribution and density of population and housing ? No measure-able impacts
- (f) Demands for government services ? None
- (g) Industrial and commercial activity ? None
- (h) Utilities ? No measure-able impacts
- (i) Transportation ? None
- (j) Safety ? None
- (k) Other appropriate social and economic circumstances ? None

2. Secondary and cumulative impacts on the physical environment and human population: This area, the east side of Whitefish Lake has been developed for many years. Further developments are limited by the availability of residential lots, making possibility of secondary and cumulative impact low, but possible.

3. Describe any mitigation/stipulation measures: No mitigation or stipulation measures are needed on an action such as this.

4. **Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives to the proposed action, including the no action alternative, if an alternative is reasonably available and prudent to consider:** Other than the No Action alternative, drilling a well would be another alternative to supply water for this project. However, wells in this area need to be at least 250 feet deep, which would cause as many, if not more, environmental impacts as the proposed action.

PART III. Conclusion

Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required? No

If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for this proposed action: No significant or cumulative impacts were identified as a result of this action. Therefore, the EA is the appropriate level of review for the action.

Name of person(s) responsible for preparation of EA:

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Date: April 13, 2006